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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6294
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 0085
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 0294
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 0096
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0254
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 0502
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 4160
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0812

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 002776

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DRL/NESCSA - BARGHOUT; NEA/ELA - RANA; EUR/ERA - GIAUQUE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/05/2017
TAGS: [EUN](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SY](#) [BE](#)
SUBJECT: BELGIANS AGREE WITH DISCREET EU APPROACH ON SYRIAN
MP RIYAD SEIF

REF: A. DAMASCUS 846

[1](#)B. STATE 119436
[1](#)C. BRUSSELS 2753

Classified By: Political Counselor Theodore H. Andrews, reasons 4. b/d.

[1](#)1. (C) In response to Ref B. demarche and in line with his initial, Aug. 29 response to demarche Ref B, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Syria desk officer Hendrik Van der Velde gave us a readout on Sept. 5 of the EU-coordinated demarche to Syria concerning the case of Syrian MP Riyad Seif. Van der Velde said that Belgium agreed that the EU had more influence in a joint confidential approach rather than public statements.

[1](#)2. (C) On behalf of the Portuguese presidency, Van der Velde reported, the French Embassy in Damascus demarched Faycas Meqdad, Syrian Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs on August 29, 2007. (NB: Portugal has no embassy in Syria.) Meqdad replied that he was unaware of Mr. Seif's health situation, that Syria respects humanitarian law and wanted to avoid politization of individual cases. He undertook to inform higher authorities of the EU's concerns and expressed confidence that they would make the "right decision." Meqdad also undertook to keep the EU presidency informed on Seif's case.

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